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INTRODUCTION

SOME FUNDAMENTALS

In order to get a clear understanding of the meaning of what has been written in some of the chapters contained in this book, it is necessary to be acquainted with a few of the chief fundamental principles of Ainu esoteric philosophy, religious belief, and superstition. Without some such knowledge, the perusal of this book will most likely render this peculiar race more enigmatical and incomprehensible than ever. It is therefore the purpose of what now follows to set forth briefly such fundamentals as may be useful to the reader in explaining some of the lore of the Ainu people and the references to their ancient customs.

First, as regards man himself. There is a great difference between the Ainu conception of man and our own. We speak of him as being of a tripartite nature, namely, body, soul, and spirit. But the Ainu speak of him as being of a simple dual nature, viz. soul and body. With them, the body is an appanage or mere shell. It is as a garment to be cast off presently. A house, so to speak, in which a person lives and moves, and by means of which he acts for a short time only. It will cease to be, but the real man will live for ever. Immortality is not imposed upon him but is naturally inherent. It is a part—the chief part—of him. When, therefore, in this book a person is said to die or get killed, it can refer only to the body. He may be killed in war, for example, but he may very easily immediately assume another human form and reappear to carry on the fight and be killed again and again.

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asserted that they traded with the races living in Eastern Siberia, and with the Kurile and Aleutian Islands and with Kamschatka. They also did much trade by barter with Matsumai. Chief Penri informed me that his ancestors traded with Manchuria. As proof of this he showed me a string of Manchurian cash, the brass bowl of a tobacco pipe, and some brass rings with which the Saghalien Ainu women decorated their belts.

The Ainu community had various methods of punishing offenders, which were regulated by the different misdemeanours committed and the dispositions of the judges and people. They never appear to have favoured the death penalty, since they considered death no punishment at all. Infliction of pain or disgrace only did they consider worthy of the name of punishment, and the more severe the pain the greater the punishment. Tying up with cords and beating was the most common method of punishing offenders, though this was superadded to other kinds in some cases. The mad were sometimes treated in this way.

For breaking into a granary a very sound beating was administered for the first offence, and this was a great disgrace. For the second, sometimes the tip of the nose or the lobes of the ears were cut off and the offender was driven out of the village and boycotted. For breaking the seventh commandment, it used to be the custom to impose fines, or to tie up the hands of the male offender behind his back and then hang him up by the hair of his head with his toes just touching the ground, and give him a whipping. The female was generally allowed to go free in disgrace, though sometimes she came in for a flogging. Single people were generally made to marry.

For murder it was customary to cut the tendons of the feet, thus maiming the culprit for life. The tendons were severed close to the heels. This was a

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The one outside, calling, was the spirit of a pine marten who wished to lure him out to kill him. These creatures abound in this part of the world. The Ainu hunt them for their skins, which are very valuable. The old man had been so irreligious as not to offer the customary wand fetishes to the spirits of the animals he had killed when hunting. This had offended them greatly, so that they had inspired him to come into the mountains where they could take vengeance and kill him in return!

It should be borne in mind that in the Ainu idea, the killing of an animal does not imply the extinction of its life, as will appear more and more clearly as we proceed. No life can ever be extinguished; it simply goes away to return later. And so, when killed, everything must be treated with due respect.

In my converse with Parapita and others, I have found them to be not at all lacking in wit on occasion. He was once out travelling with me in the far interior. Our old servant was quite bright sometimes in his way. I had my gun with me in case of meeting a bear or coming across something to eat for supper. As we were going along, he pointed to something moving among the bushes. I thereupon dismounted and fired at what I supposed to be a wolf or fox. Whatever it was immediately bounded off into the forest, but left something behind him. On going to the spot, my servant picked up half a hare which he brought to me. Evidently the animal—wolf or fox—was surprised in the act of devouring his breakfast. We took our half along with us and Parapita proceeded to skin it as soon as we reached an inn in the evening. The inn-keeper saw this and wanted to know how it came to pass that he had but half an animal to skin.

This is the conversation I heard between them.

Inn-keeper. What have you got there?

Ainu. As you see, merely half a hare.

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117 he had been and why he desired me to lie so close, he informed me that he had been to officiate as chief at a funeral, and the people did not like strangers to see where they hid their dead away. Knowing something about their thoughts on death and burial and what was supposed to happen after, I let the subject abide then, intending to find out more at some future time. The opportunity came with the death of Chief Penri's mother.

I had been away on furlough in England and when I returned I went off again to Piratori to visit old friends and scenes. There I heard of the death of my old friend—Penri's mother—of sugar and tobacco fame. She was dead and buried. Though it was not customary for the Ainu to talk of deceased persons, I thought that I might perhaps venture to inquire about this old lady, for she and I had really become very good friends, old witch though she was. I broached the subject and got along very well till I asked to be allowed to visit her grave. The chief demurred at this and said he could not take me. At last, however, he consented to show me the way. Off we went, but he would not go to within some sixty yards of the spot, and I had therefore to proceed alone. There he stood far off, watching and directing me. The dear old man was actually afraid of his old mother's ghost! He excused his timidity with the following piece of lore: "If a person should tread upon a grave, it matters not how old it may be, he will surely be punished. Therefore take warning. Beware!" All I could see at the grave was a post set up at the head and a few broken utensils scattered about over the place. The branches covering it were from the unlucky elder tree.

Self-preservation is undoubtedly among the first laws of nature. Penri knew this and acted upon it largely, for I found that he had not merely a kindly

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regard for my skin, but great concern for his own also. 761● And naturally so, indeed. Knowing that I was bent on going to such a dangerous place as his mother's grave, he evidently gave notice of the fact to his relations and friends. And they forthwith prepared to meet the emergency. When we returned to the hut I found a man and several women gathered about the doorway, [783] all smiles and good will. They begged me to submit to an exorcising and purifying rite! They had bowls of water for us and asked us to wash our faces and hands. This was the purification part of the rite. While this was in progress, the women beat and brushed us down with fetishes and bunches of grass. This was to drive out any evil spirits or seeds of disease implanted within us by the deceased old woman for trespassing on her domain. That done, we were received once again among the people and allowed to enter the hut. I suppose the antidote worked all right, for neither of us seemed to get any harm from our little visit.

There was also, I found later, one other reason why 117 the Chief was so reluctant to take me to his mother's grave. A very few years before I came to Hokkaidō some people had come and secretly dug up a few Ainu skeletons from their resting places to use as specimens for scientific studies. As soon as this was known by them it caused a great uproar, for it touched them on a very tender spot. After that they were very much afraid of other like visitations, and so were particularly careful to keep the place of burial secret. It was really very wonderful that Penri should have taken me, and showed unbounded confidence in me.

In a previous chapter I mentioned finding an old 885 woman living in a little hut quite alone. I have seen 761 many such in my time here. These are built for the aged to die in, and, as soon as the inmate has passed away, are burned down. Penri's mother had her tiny hut and in it she died. It, too, was sent off in flames

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888 as soon as she was buried. The purpose of the burning
761 was to send the place to heaven for her convenience!
[768] This may sound peculiar but it is an undoubted part of the Ainu animistic creed. One piece of lore concerning this custom [illegible]e which I find is not carried out at present, is this:

768 "When a man's wife dies, the husband must burn the house and send it off in that way with her to heaven. The husband may not marry a second time, hence he will not require the hut upon this earth; but he will want it in heaven when he there rejoins his spouse." This only refers to the principal wife, as the others have their own separate dwellings.

But here, I think, it will be well to explain what I mean by animism.

[771] The Ainu are a deeply religious race and their ani-
761 mistic philosophy has carried them to great lengths. They not only believe that beasts, birds, fishes and growing trees and all plants have their own individual lives, but they hold, too, that inorganic substances have life as well. The people not only infer that whatever has life can and does move, but also that whatever moves must have life. Hence the bubbling spring, the sparking, rippling rivulet, the gently gliding stream, the rushing torrent, the flying clouds, the whistling winds, the pouring rain, the roaring storm, the restless ocean, and all such phenomena have, in their opinion, real lives abiding in them. So the hut of the old lady
[768] above mentioned was to them a real living being, the visible material parts of which, being burnt up, allowed the living spirit to ascend to heaven for her soul to reside in! In their idea no existing life can ever cease to be, whether it be good or evil, and immortality with them is as natural as nature itself. Life and living spirit are one and the same thing with them, and are never separated in thought or conception. To them life is the most intelligent, energetic and natural object in existence, and as regards its

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higher forms, paradoxical as it may appear, it is looked upon as both spirit and matter, substance and attribute, at one and the same time. It is not the essence that changes but its manifestation. The personal spirit itself is the principle of life behind the life—the very indestructable quintessence of being. Unless one knows this to be their faith, he will find that there are many little things in their daily life which he can not hope to understand.

It is this faith, indeed, handed down from generation to generation for thousands of years, that has produced such an enigma among us. An enigma which cannot in the nature of things last much longer in this age of progress. There is now no place left in the world for either material or spiritual atrophy.

I used to think that this people had a very great fear of death, but during my long sojourn among them, I have had to modify my opinion on this matter considerably. That some do fear it immensely is as true with them as with other individuals among other races, for I have been with many of them at the time of death and seen that it is so; but then there are many others who do not seem to dread it at all. I will give just one concrete example.

I went to a certain village one day where there were many Christians. As soon as I arrived I was told that a poor woman was then in the act of dying from pleurisy. I asked why they had not sent for the doctor, and was told that he was away and would not be back again for a week and that they could not afford to send to a distant village for another. Would I come in to see her? As her pastor, I did so of course. When I got in I was greatly surprised to find her sitting by the hearth, well bolstered up with mattresses. She could hardly breathe, as she suffered agonies when she tried to do so. I counted sixteen women sitting about the hut, very busy indeed making garments in which to dress her corpse before burial. This was going on

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761 right before her very eyes and all were talking about the funeral! They were embroidering gloves for her hands in patterns of white, and also socks, a headdress and an outer garment. They chatted in quite a lively way, the dying lady herself joining in. I told her that she ought to be quiet and asked her if she really wanted to die. "Oh, no. I want to live," she said.

I treated her in my own fashion for twenty minutes, by which time all of what she designated as "spear-thrust-picking-pains," which came every time she breathed, had gone quite away, and her pulse had returned to normal. She declared that she felt quite cured. I gave her some gruel made very thin and packed off the women to their homes, telling them to retain their death wailings for another occasion. They went out giggling like a pack of hysterical school girls. The lady lived for ten years after this and kept well. I verily believe that apart from the illness, those terrible suggestions of death which the making of the clothing produced, would have killed her if I had not appeared on the scenes. However that may be, the point I desire to make is that this woman did not fear death in the least. And I know there are others like her in this.

117 As I was one day passing through the village of Piratori Panata, I heard a great wailing for the dead going on in the hut of an old friend named Kanturuka. He was a good old fellow of about eighty, and he had given me quite a big lot of old folk-lore and told me many stories. He was not much liked by some of the villagers, and was nicknamed the "divine hare." The [825 776] hare, I found, was looked upon as the very lowest of the animal divinities and the name was given to my friend because he was not regarded very highly by his neighbours. However, I liked him very well and we had many happy times together.

761 I walked in to see who had died and found that it was Kanturuka himself. He had fallen down in a fit,

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completely paralyzed. The members of his family would not rest till I had come up to his body and laid my hands on his head in blessing. They all thought he was quite dead, but I had my doubts about it. I called him loudly by name, when without any movement on his part, he answered "Ha." Yet the people said they were sure he was dead and that his answer had come back from the nether world. The poor old fellow was buried the next day.

"That people continue to live after the death of the body," so runs the story, "is made plain by dreams, for that the dead sometimes really show themselves to people in dreams during sleep is matter of common experience. Once upon a time, a great chief died and the people of his village shed many tears; they wept both loudly and long. The death wail reached his ears even in the nether world and made him very unhappy. He therefore appeared to the people in a dream and asked them to cease weeping, for the noise they were making worried him; otherwise he was very comfortable indeed."

When a person dies, the body is dressed in its best clothes and laid lengthwise by the hearth, the feet toward the doorway, ready for the departure to Hades. Should the deceased be a man, his bow, arrows and quiver, his pipe, tobacco-box, fire sticks and tinder or flint and steel for obtaining light, a long and short knife, a sword, a cup and tray, moustache-lifters and a small bundle of clothes are placed by his side. The clothes are cut or torn and the other things broken or chipped. All these articles are buried with the body. The cutting, chipping and breaking are said to be done in order to kill the things and send their spirits off to heaven with the corpse.

A young man—a cripple—died on our premises at Sapporo some years ago. He was a Christian and I gave him Christian burial, taking the service myself. Our man-servant, Parapita, came with us to the grave.

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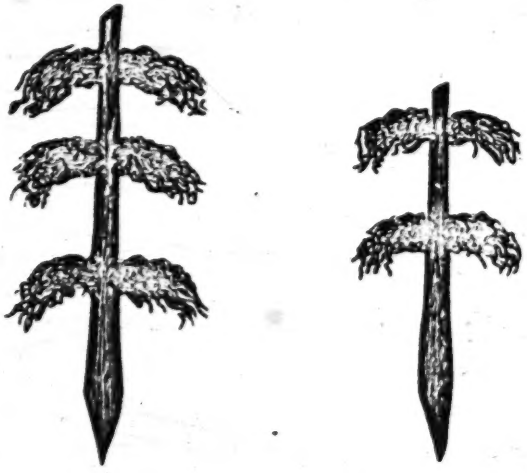
shipped. The whole is called *kew-mande-ni*, i.e. "tree for sending off the living creature." 527 231

"Then one 'spread out, and one 'twisted wand,' two in all, are set up over the cub's head. After this its own specially prepared viands—dumplings and fish—and a few cub arrows are presented to it to carry on its journey back to the mountains." [778]



FETISHES MADE AT A BEAR FESTIVAL

So we find the idea of a death is emphatically denied. The animal is not killed, but his living spirit is sent away to its heaven in the mountains. There he once more enjoys the society of his parents and friends. After a time there he is supposed to be reincarnated and to return to this earth as another cub. Such was my native friend's very interesting written account of the *iyomande* or "sending away" festival. This national feast goes on till late in the night, when such as are able to do so return to their homes or go to stay with friends in the village. Much *saké* is, of course, consumed, and all get more or less intoxicated. The [761 775]

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769 suppose. Yet, on becoming better acquainted with them, I found it to exist in every house, for it is seen in the worship of the ancestral fire goddess upon the hearth and in the prayers and offerings made before her old man consort as he stands in his place behind the treasures in his corner at the north-eastern end of the hut. The worship of these was described in the chapter on "The Two Household Gods" and is not further referred to here.

769, 562 When living with this people, I was much surprised to find that the women did not worship the gods. Indeed, for a long time I supposed that they worshipped nothing at all. But one day I was astonished to find on returning to the chief's hut, where I was staying, that the mistress was outside by the east end window, sitting down on her knees before the fetishes set up there towards the sunrise. She had a libation of *saké* in a wooden cup and a morsel of food in a leaf. I had surprised her in an act of worship. I found out later, when talking to her on the subject, that she had been sent out by her husband to worship and make offerings to the departed spirits of the family, for these spirits were not supposed to be so very far away. When I asked Mrs. Penri what she said when worshipping as I then saw her, she replied, "I was told to say, 'O ye honourable ancestors, I am sent to present you with this *saké* and food. Please condescend to accept this offering and be ye happy!'"

761 775 The old chief and I had much conversation on these matters soon after, and I learned many things from him. Particularly did I learn that in their idea, death in no way implied the extinction of the life or soul. He said they did not like the body to become a senseless corpse, but we must not imagine that because it became such, the soul also decomposed or got withered up; and here a thought seemed to strike him, for he said, "Look here, my friend, the old Ainu used to

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makes a poison which they called *Chikoptep*, and this means, 'corpse maker.' But such poison only affected the body. The *remat*, 'soul,' always made its escape out of it and lived on." (The poison here referred to was made from *Zanthoxylum*, *Picrasma* and *Leucothoe* wood).

I then asked the chief how his people expressed the thing called 'death' or 'to die,' and this is what he told me.

"Death and dying are called by various names by my people. They are such as these. The most common is 'going to the lower regions'; then, 'losing bodily strength'; then, 'going away'; then, 'going to Hades'; then, 'being wound up in sleep'; then, 'sleeping the other sleep'; then, 'leaving the world behind'; then, 'abdicating one's village'; then, 'having space for thought'; then 'making a clearance'; then 'piercing the skies'; and also 'is not' and 'hidden away.'" Such, then, are the common names for this "King of Terrors," not one of which implies the idea of extinction. In this we surely find the true Ainu rationale of necrolatry.

Pursuing this subject, the chief added, "The ancient ones have said, 'If a person cultivates a selfish spirit and offers nothing by way of food and drink to his deceased ancestors, the elders should warn him by saying, "Stupid and wicked person, thou art a fool, and thou dost not understand; thou shalt die a hard death." If this be said, all people, young and old alike, will be careful to worship the dead."

Another short counsel ran thus: "Should a person leave his home and go away and die in a strange land, some of his relatives should surely go to that land and offer worship and libations. The dead ones observe all deeds, good and bad. Those who do that which is right are blessed by them, and those who do evil are cursed."

EFFIGIES

778 776 782 796 a thankful prayer to Kamui Fuchi, with the usual burnt offering of a backward-shaven *inau*. Then from four to six bunches of curled shavings are affixed to the *kamui*, and four fresh small-winged *inau* are set up at the soul *nusa* with an outspread-shaven *inau* between each pair. The *kamui* is taken out by the sacred window, receives due thanks, and is gently dismantled at the *nusa*. The *inau* body is erected next to the outspread-shaven *inau*, with its face to the east. Praise and thanks are again given to it and to the important *kamui*. Sometimes an extra offering is made, of a yeasty substance (*kamdachi*) and the kind of millet (*piyaba*) usually used [273] for brewing. When the sacred beer was available, libations of it might be poured, but the yeast and millet were given so that the *kamui* might, if they so desired, brew for themselves.

[755] If a hand-made *kamui* has proved inefficient, that is if after it has been invoked to cure sickness the case becomes hopeless, the ● [761] *kamui* is dismissed, and if a sudden death occurs is dismissed immediately. In such cases the ritual is curtailed, a scanty allowance of two curled *inau* is enough, without fresh *inau* at the *nusa*. [763] Sometimes, however, when the life of a comatose patient seemed to be needlessly prolonged by the help of the *kamui*, it was given ritual dismissal without reducing the reward, so that the dying person might have a happy release. It is also said that an aged man or woman lingering hopelessly ill would request ritual dismissal for the *kamui* to whom appeal for help had been made. In such a case full honours were accorded.

778 776 532 There are three brothers who have similar effigies (Pl. VII, fig. 3). The most commonly invoked is the Protector of Vigour and Welfare (*Seremak kopungine shutu-inau Kamui*). He has the conventional mouth of the winged *inau*, a flattened belly, nine wings, two sets of curled shavings and a sword and spear of mugwort. The second, One who Rears or Trains (*Urespa*), is specially concerned with the health of children, but is seldom invoked except in the case of a long illness. The third, Achievement or Success (*Usapki*), whom I have never seen, was formerly invoked for success in hunting and fishing.

[824] The remaining *kamui* of this type differ mostly in the material used. For additional defence of the doorway the same kind of effigy is made either of elder or of *Maackia amurensis* (*chikube-ni*) the bast of which has an odour which is curiously repugnant to some people and is believed to repel evil spirits. Another *shutu*

7:Munro & Seligman D. E-4. 5 (ca. 1900-1942) 1963
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XI

DEATH AND BURIAL

THE SPIRITS of the virtuous dead go to the Underworld, but those of evil persons suffer in the Wet Underworld (*Teine Pokna Moshiri*).[1] There is only a limited belief in reincarnation; a few exceptionally good and gifted men are said to be granted rebirth, and an infant dying unweaned remains in the care of Kamui Fuchi until it can be reborn in the womb of its mother.[2] Except in the case of old people who have lived a full life and left descendants, death is believed to be due not to natural causes but to the action of evil spirits. Kamui Fuchi and the other *kamui* whose protection is sought throughout life are not blamed for death.

When a sick person is delirious, with staring eyes, plucking fingers or clenched hands, the presence of an evil spirit is suspected and purification is performed. When the sufferer becomes unconscious, an elder would say a prayer to Kamui Fuchi. This, the 'self word last said' (*yai ye kesui itak*) may represent a prayer by, as much as for, the dying.

[1] The spirit of a deceased person arrives first at a spot in the Underworld (*Pokna Moshiri*) where the road forks. One fork leads to the village of the deities (*Kamui Kotan*), the destination of the good, and the other to the Wet Underworld (*Teine Pokna Moshiri*), the destination of the bad. The spirit is led to one of these two by a dog which is under the direction of Kamui Fuchi (Batchelor, *The Ainu and their Folk-lore*, London, 1901, and *Materials for Summarised Ethnography of Eastern Asiatic Peoples*, Vol 2, *The Ainu*, Tokyo, 1944).—H.W.

[2] Munro states that the Ainu did not believe sexual intercourse to be the direct cause of pregnancy, but that it opened the door to the return of a departed soul. However, if such a belief were general it would be in contradistinction to the statement above, that only certain exceptional people experienced reincarnation. It is probable that either or both beliefs were held partially.—B.Z.S.